

NATIONAL THREAT LANDSCAPE STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT

This assessment is intended to provide situational awareness of threats with potential national-level implications related to public order, public safety and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The information in this assessment is based on reporting from RCMP Divisions, law enforcement partners, searches conducted against RCMP holdings, and open source resources (current as of 23 November, 2021). The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on emerging threats and will provide updates on a periodic or as required basis.

KEY POINTS

- Momentum in response to the call out for Wet'suwet'en solidarity actions is increasing and planned and impromptu solidarity actions in the form of public order events and disruptions to critical infrastructure are expected to continue in response to RCMP enforcement against the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) protestors.
- The IMCIT assesses that, with the authorization of vaccines for children and continued implementation of vaccine mandates in various employment sectors and provinces in Canada, opposition to the government's response will continue to grow.
- Threats to the vaccine rollout may occur in spontaneous incidents by dissenting or opportunistic individuals, particularly as part of protests held outside immunization clinics for children and young persons. The IMCIT has no new information to indicate any coordinated attempts to sabotage or disrupt the vaccine supply chain.

THREATS TO PUBLIC SAFETY

COASTAL GASLINK PIPELINE (CGL) OPPOSITION – MORICE RIVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Potential for continued criminality and solidarity actions which could impact public or officer safety.

On November 18, 2021, E Division initiated a "rescue and enforcement operation" which removed a group of protestors who had illegally blocked a Coastal GasLink (CGL) workers' camp since November 14, 2021. The operation resulted in 14 arrests.¹ Enforcement continued on November 19 in order to clear obstructions and remove individuals from the building-like structures in the area, resulting in an additional 15 arrests.² This operation has inspired "solidarity actions" across the country (details of initial solidarity actions are referenced in IMCIT STA 01 - 2021-11-19; details of solidarity actions that occurred in October 2021 are referenced in IMCIT NTL #2021-05 -- 2021-10-27).

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Canada

Since November 19, 2021, IMCIT has observed over 25 solidarity actions that have occurred within Canada in response to this ongoing situation.³ Thus far, they have targeted critical infrastructure with rail and highway blockades, as well as a number of public order events involving temporary traffic disruptions. In addition, as RCMP is the Police of Jurisdiction (PoJ) that carried out the original enforcement action against the CGL protestors, planned and impromptu protests have been organized outside RCMP detachments. Some examples of solidarity actions include the following:

- On November 18, a blockade (still ongoing) began on Highway 6 in Caledonia, ON.⁴
- On November 19, a protest took place in Burnaby, BC outside the RCMP detachment.⁵
- On November 21, railroad tracks in Toronto, ON were blocked for three hours.⁶
- On November 21, tire fires were lit on the CN railway tracks in Montreal, QC.⁷
- On November 23, the entrance to Shell Canada Products Limited in Hamilton, ON was blocked.⁸

A "Call to Action: Stand with Land Defenders, Stand with Wet'suwet'en" for the week of November 22 – 29, 2021 was posted on social media on November 21, 2021;⁹ however, numerous public order events continue to be publicized outside the specific call to action by various individuals as well as Indigenous, social justice, and environmental groups and are expected to persist past November 29, 2021.

Anarchist blogs are promoting actions involving illegal tactics such as blockades and burning objects to obstruct roads and railways. This demonstrates ideologically motivated support for these solidarity actions amongst populations with anti-authority and anarchist grievances¹⁰ posing concerns for public and officer safety. In addition, a popular Canadian anarchist blog reposted content from 2020 which provides a "practical section" that includes information on rail sabotage, the destruction of signal boxes and rail tracks, as well as providing tips to protect against fingerprint and DNA identification.^a Due to the illicit nature of these types of actions, it is unlikely that specific plans to disrupt critical infrastructure in this manner will be advertised beforehand via open sources. Information from the Canadian National (CN) Police^b indicates that there have been three rail sabotage incidents in QC. Information posted on anarchist social media claimed responsibility for the actions.¹¹ Photos and descriptions provided by CN Police are below¹²:



Figure 1. L'Isle Verte QC: Unknown subjects shunted the tracks by drilling a hole into a tie plate and placed copper wire in the hole, which was held in place by a screw. The wire was hidden under ballast.

^a A blog post titled "To Settlers, by Settlers: A Callout for Rail Disruptions in Solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en" was posted on the Montreal Counter-Information webpage which self-describes as "anarchist and anti-authoritarian news and analysis".

^b CN Police protect and investigate rail infrastructure.



Figure 2. St. Ulric, QC: Unknown subjects shunted the tracks by placing a copper wire across the rails.

In addition, the subjects either attempted to fuse the copper wire to the rail by using thermite (which failed) or their intentions were to compromise the integrity of the rail by building an elevated surface on top of the rail.



Figure 3. Saint-Arsène QC: Unknown subjects drilled a hole into the side of the rail and placed copper wire in the hole, which was held in place by a screw. The wire was hidden under ballast.

Overall sentiment towards police, specifically the RCMP, is negative, with videos of arrests circulating and narratives of police violence driving discussions related to solidarity actions. Information from E Division indicates that specific allegations have circulated that the RCMP prevented food and medical supplies from reaching protest camps, have used excessive force, and are using “attack” dogs.¹³ Circulation of these types of false narratives could lead to increased hostility towards officers during public interactions.

Individuals with shared grievances across Canada have the ability to mobilize quickly in response to calls for solidarity actions. Recent extreme weather in BC has worsened existing supply chain issues, which may in turn be exacerbated by potential blockades. Should there be an impact to critical infrastructure that affects members of the public, calls for counter protests and the dismantling of ongoing blockades could occur. These situations may escalate to violence. While there is opposition online to blockade tactics, no counter-protests have been identified at the time of this writing.

Solidarity actions in support of Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs who opposed the CGL pipeline have occurred in the past, in February of 2020, significant blockades of rail lines occurred throughout Canada.

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The IMCIT assesses that momentum in response to the call out for actions is increasing and planned and impromptu solidarity actions in the form of public order events and disruptions to critical infrastructure are expected to continue in response to RCMP enforcement against the CGL protestors.

CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES - NATIONAL MOBILIZATION

Potential for criminality and potential for Canada-wide actions.

Environmental groups have been active this reporting period, with significant overlap in discussions and organizing related to Wet'suwet'en solidarity actions. Signage at an Extinction Rebellion protest, which occurred at Pearson International Airport at the end of October, included the slogan "Hands off Wet'suwet'en."¹⁴

Overall sentiment among environmental groups appears to be that the COP26^c was a failure and the federal government continues to ignore climate change. On November 12, 2021, three individuals were arrested for mischief during a march for climate change when red handprints were painted on an Environment Canada building in Vancouver.¹⁵ On November 22, 2021, a peaceful rally against fossil fuels took place outside the Office of the Prime Minister and Privy Council in order to demand action on the *Just Transition Act*.^{d 16}

Recent flooding and mudslides in BC are being discussed among environmental groups who believe that such threats to the climate, coupled with the extreme heat and wildfires in the summer, can no longer be ignored and are symptoms of a climate crisis fueled by policies they perceive to be rooted in colonialism, capitalism and the consumption of Indigenous lands. Narratives critical of the RCMP's involvement in enforcing the CGL injunction are also circulating, indicating there is a perception resources should be directed away from policing "land defenders" and towards operations assisting with the response to extreme weather affecting BC.

The IMCIT assesses that public order events related to climate issues are expected to continue sporadically or in conjunction with protests related to opposition to pipelines.

OLD-GROWTH LOGGING - SOUTHWEST VANCOUVER ISLAND, BRITISH COLUMBIA (BC)

Potential for continued criminality, solidarity actions and counter-protests which could impact public or officer safety.

On November 17, 2021, British Columbia's Court of Appeal reserved its decision regarding the injunction that prohibits the obstruction, impediment, or interference with logging.¹⁷ Currently, the judges have not indicated a future date to release their decision and the temporary injunction remains in place.¹⁸ The total number of individuals arrested since May 2021 is now 1168.¹⁹

^c COP26 refers to Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change, which was held October 31 to November 12 in Scotland to discuss nations meeting climate targets. <https://www.ctvnews.ca/climate-and-environment/cop26-glossary-understand-the-terms-issues-at-un-climate-summit-1.5627369>

^d *The Just Transition Act* relates to socioeconomic impacts of Canada's climate policies and its commitment to, "support the future and livelihood of workers and their communities in the transition to a low-carbon global economy." <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/roadmap>

Social media activity continues to encourage individuals to gather in protest at Fairy Creek; however, during the month of November, online discussions related to Wet'suwet'en solidarity actions have overshadowed the issue of old growth logging due to an overlap in groups and individuals who would be supportive of both issues.

During this reporting period, the BC government plan for old-growth logging deferrals²⁰ has generated discussion among the logging industry. Concerns over potential job loss resulted in pro-logging rallies local to BC this reporting period.²¹

The IMCIT assessment remains that, based on social media, protesters plan to remain in the area and any arrests made by officers will be perceived negatively and could spark sporadic solidarity actions across the country.

FISHERIES DISPUTE - ST. MARYS BAY, NOVA SCOTIA (NS)

Potential for unauthorized fishing and increased tensions between non-Indigenous and Indigenous fishers which could impact public or officer safety.

In September of 2020, the Sipekne'katik First Nation community fishers launched a self-regulated lobster fishery that met opposition from non-Indigenous commercial fishers resulting in violence, property damage and arson.²² In July of 2021, the Sipekne'katik launched a food, social and ceremonial (FSC) fishery outside of the commercial season which was regulated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO).²³ Since August of 2021, the Sipekne'katik have transitioned to operating a self-regulated treaty lobster fishery in St. Marys Bay that harvests at various times of the year.²⁴ This treaty fishery operates according to Band rules, but without regulation from DFO or commercial restrictions.

Incidents that occurred in the area throughout this reporting period include:

- On October 29, 2021, a video surfaced on social media showing a Sipekne'katik fisher dumping crates of lobster into Digby harbour to protest DFO's compliance tracking system of marking lobster tails with hole punchers to identify them as FSC catch. The video has raised concerns from DFO and the Sipekne'katik Chief about conservation.²⁵ As marked lobsters are not eligible for commercial sale, the perception that FSC fishers are diverting their catch for sale may increase tensions with commercially licensed fishers.
- On October 30, 2021, a fishing vessel operator from Indian Brook, part of the Sipekne'katik First Nation, allegedly chased a Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) vessel out of St Marys Bay. The vessel operator was charged with dangerous operation of a vessel, obstructing a peace officer, and uttering threats.²⁶

On November 18, 2021, the Honourable Joyce MURRAY visited Atlantic provinces in her new role as Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the CCG. Murray reaffirmed that the federal government has the authority to regulate moderate livelihood fishing and will work with Indigenous communities to do so sustainably.²⁷

Lobster fishing areas near St Marys Bay are expected to open for commercial fishing on November 29, 2021.²⁸ Sipekne'katik fishers have not indicated intentions to cease their operations at this time.^{s.37}

s.37

Currently there is no information to suggest public order events will occur in Nova Scotia as they have in the past,³⁰ or that there could be spillover into other parts of the country. The IMCIT continues to maintain visibility on the evolving situation.

"WHITE LIVES MATTER" MARCHES AND POSTERING CAMPAIGN

Potential for solidarity actions and counter-protests that could impact public or officer safety.

"White Lives Matter" (WLM) public order events have been advertised internationally since March of 2021. Although WLM posters have been observed in several Canadian cities, to date, public order events remain confined to Ontario with protests occurring monthly since April of 2021, attracting minimal participation and no reported incidents of violence. Based on open source information, the most recent protest planned for November 13 did not occur. WLM Canadian groups remain actively engaged in online chatter; however, no future public order events have been identified at this time.

Open source queries and information from law enforcement partners for this reporting period yielded no specific intelligence to indicate WLM events pose a risk to public safety from protesters or counter-protesters.

ANTI-LOCKDOWN/ANTI-MASK/ANTI-VACCINATION PROTESTS

Potential for public health restriction violations. Potential for protests that could impact public or officer safety.

The IMCIT assesses that opposition to vaccine mandates and passports continues to grow and could become a potential flash point for acts of violence. The disruption of Remembrance Day ceremonies in British Columbia during this reporting period marks another escalation within this movement. Weekly public order events involving ideologically motivated individuals^e, as well as people who would not typically attend protests or post political views online, have continued at the same frequency for this reporting period. Fears of forced vaccination of children and the sharing of international content claiming adverse reactions in children who have received the vaccine has been circulating online in response to Canada's authorization of vaccines for children. IMCIT assesses that this could increase the frequency of protests moving forward. Social media posts within anti-vaccine networks suggest that some locations of vaccine clinics set up for children will be met with protest. Currently, children's pop-up vaccine clinic locations are circulating on social media within anti-vaccine networks and a planned protest on November 25, 2021 outside a children's vaccination clinic in Windsor, ON has gained media attention.³¹

^e Ideologically motivated individuals does not necessarily mean ideologically motivated criminality or ideologically motivated violence. The non-criminal ideologically motivated space includes expressions of racism, bigotry, misogyny, and individuals engaging in lawful protests.

The IMCIT assesses that there is a potential for heightened hostility to occur at any protest located at a site where younger populations are being vaccinated.

A number of notable incidents have occurred during this reporting period:

- On November 3, 2021, Quebec and Ontario provincial governments announced vaccines would not be mandatory for current health workers due to the potential impact such mandates could have on the health care system.³² Regardless, several hospitals have implemented their own policies regarding mandatory vaccination which have impacted staffing. For example, in the Waterloo Region, it was reported that 102 health care workers lost their jobs for not complying with the local hospitals immunization requirements.³³ Multiple news reports during the month of November have focused on concerns from health care workers about harassment and threats they have received, specifically in response to sharing content discussing the safety of vaccines.³⁴
- On November 7, 2021, disruptions at some Canadian airports took place as a result of promotion by a key personality within the anti-vaccine/anti-lockdown/anti-mask movement who continues to attract an engaged audience. The convoy disruption at the Calgary airport generated the most discussion as 17 summonses were issued by officers under the *Traffic Safety Act* and the organizer of the protest was arrested at the airport by police and charged with one count of mischief.³⁵ Overall, it appears these actions did not generate the level of disruption the protesters intended.
- On November 11, 2021, vaccine opponents disrupted Remembrance Day ceremonies in BC.³⁶ The disruption of such a symbolic event demonstrates an escalation in the anti-vaccine/anti-lockdown/anti-mask movement, specifically with reference to locations of protest. Previous locations of protests such as hospitals and schools have also been considered escalations of this movement, as prior to the pandemic the negative optics of protesting outside such locations would have been counter-productive to gaining support for a specific cause.
- On November 15, 2021, the Prime Minister's (PM) itinerary for a visit to Edmonton circulated social media. Rhetoric surrounding the visit called for protests and the arrests of the PM, Premier Jason KENNEY and Deputy PM Chrystia FREELAND and associates.³⁷ Further, online information suggested some vocal personalities posted about following the PM around during his visit.³⁸ While it was not uncommon prior to Canada's 44th General Election for individuals to seek the PM's itinerary and occasionally stage a protest, intentions to follow public officials by this movement appears to be a continuation of tactics observed during the election campaign period.
- On November 20, 2021, the fifth iteration of the World Wide Demonstration for Freedom took place in several Canadian cities. The rallies did not receive widespread media attention and no major incidents were reported.

News of a fourth lockdown in Austria³⁹ has fueled narratives of segregation within Canada between vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, which has reinforced claims by some Canada-based vocal personalities about unending government overreach.

The IMCIT assesses that anti-vaccination/anti-lockdown/anti-mask narratives and public order events will increase.

THREATS TO THE COVID-19 VACCINE ROLLOUT

Potential threats to the vaccine rollout may occur spontaneously by dissenting or opportunistic individuals. A mobile immunization clinic in Sarnia, ON, closed earlier than scheduled out of caution due to threatening comments from anti-vaccine protesters.⁴⁰ If anti-vaccine protesters gather outside immunization clinics during the rollout of the vaccine to young persons, clinic staff may cancel or reschedule appointments out of concerns for staff and patient safety. Police in the US⁴¹ and Australia⁴² have attended anti-vaccination protests held outside clinics where threats were directed towards staff while children were present.

Nationally, medical sites and government offices have reported receiving “Notices of Liability” and “Cease and Desist” letters containing anti-vaccine rhetoric.⁴³ These lettering campaigns, organized by a popular online persona who self-declared herself as the “Head of State and Commander in Chief of Canada”, contain violent and threatening language and are expected to extend to schools and school boards during the vaccine rollout for young persons. This persona has also recently ordered her followers to “Shoot to kill anyone who tries to inject children under the age of 19 years old with Coronavirus19 vaccines”.⁴⁴ In the past, the lettering campaigns have presented a nuisance for public health officials and police; however, it is possible that her followers may engage in aggressive or criminal acts motivated by their leader’s escalating rhetoric. At this time, the IMCIT has no new information to indicate any coordinated attempts to sabotage or disrupt the vaccine supply chain or its transport.

While fraudulent vaccine certification schemes continue to emerge as unvaccinated individuals devise ways to circumvent vaccine mandates⁴⁵, they are unlikely to affect the rollout of the legitimate vaccine supply. An Ontario government employee was among two people charged for a security breach of the province’s online vaccine booking system, which the subjects used to access personal information to facilitate targeted phishing scams.⁴⁶ While this breach appears to be financially motivated, it underscores the potential for insider threats within organizations that handle sensitive information pertaining to the vaccine rollout.

Issued by: Ideologically Motivated Criminal Intelligence Team (IMCIT)

Approved by: Director, Directorate of Strategic Intelligence, Federal Policing National Intelligence

¹ <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2087&languageId=1&contentId=72197>

² [Ibid.](#)

³ <https://www.facebook.com/events/1773340219540489/>

⁴ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/highway-6-indigenous-blockade-1.6255054>

⁵ <https://burnabybeacon.com/article/protest-wetsuweten-blockade-burnaby/>

- ⁶ <https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2021/11/21/toronto-demonstration-held-in-solidarity-with-wetsuweten-land-defenders-in-bc.html>
- ⁷ <https://twitter.com/submedia/status/1462584342559944708>
- ⁸ <https://twitter.com/DefundHPS/status/1463129977281515529>
- ⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/events/421542176355792/>
- ¹⁰ <https://itsgoingdown.org/canadian-tire-fire-20/>
- ¹¹ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CWoGC2JN7ua/>
- ¹² Email from CN Police dated 2021-11-23
- ¹³ <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2087&languageId=1&contentId=72172>
- ¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/xrgta/posts/115189300950975>
- ¹⁵ <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/red-hand-prints-placed-on-environment-canada-building-during-climate-rally-3-people-arrested-1.5664975>
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- ¹⁷ <https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/court-reserves-injunction-decision-in-fairy-creek-old-growth-logging-protests-1.5669739>
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- ¹⁹ <https://bc-cb.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ViewPage.action?siteNodeId=2130&languageId=1&contentId=72077>
- ²⁰ <https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/indigenous-leaders-concerned-over-b-c-s-process-for-old-growth-logging-deferrals-1.5653831>
- ²¹ <https://ckpgtoday.ca/2021/11/17/log-drivers-protest-logging-deferrals-in-smithers/>
- ²² <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/lobster-catch-destroyed-vehicle-burned-as-tension-rises-over-indigenous-fishery-in-n-s-1.5144540>
- ²³ <https://www.halifaxexaminer.ca/featured/its-been-a-year-since-violence-erupted-on-the-south-shore-but-the-cases-of-dozens-of-people-facing-charges-are-in-limbo-and-the-status-of-the-moderate-livelihood-fishery-remains-unresolved/>
- ²⁴ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/nova-scotia-first-nation-treaty-fishery-monday-1.6140089>
- ²⁵ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/sipekne-katik-fisherman-lobster-protest-1.6230615>
- ²⁶ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8374351/ns-fishing-vessel-operator-charged/>
- ²⁷ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/new-dfo-minister-visits-atlantic-canada-1.6255624>
- ²⁸ <https://www.cjls.com/2021/11/02/dfo-approves-two-day-flexibility-for-lobster-fishing-opening-day/>
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- ³⁰ <https://atlantic.ctvnews.ca/nova-scotia-lobster-fishermen-protest-out-of-control-first-nations-fishery-1.5106027>
- ³¹ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/windsor/windsor-anti-vaccination-protests-police-1.6259907>
- ³² <https://globalnews.ca/news/8348623/covid-vaccine-mandate-health-workers-ontario-quebec/>
- ³³ <https://www.therecord.com/news/waterloo-region/2021/11/19/102-hospital-staff-in-waterloo-region-lose-job-for-not-getting-covid-19-vaccine.html>
- ³⁴ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8361278/canada-doctors-covid-online-hate/>
- ³⁵ <https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/convoy-protest-at-calgary-airport-does-not-cause-disruption-to-operations>
- ³⁶ <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/it-s-just-so-perverse-vaccine-opponents-seize-on-remembrance-day-to-spread-message-in-several-b-c-cities-1.5662657>
- ³⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/CalgaryFreedomCentral/posts/346992767192631>
- ³⁸ <https://twitter.com/ARCCollective/status/1460445128972070916>
- ³⁹ <https://globalnews.ca/news/8392136/austria-4th-covid-19-lockdown-begins/>
- ⁴⁰ <https://lfpres.com/news/local-news/unfortunate-that-it-did-happen-here-in-sarnia-protesters-threats-forced-bus-vax-clinic-to-close-early>
- ⁴¹ <https://krdo.com/news/2021/11/22/threats-cancel-clinics-to-help-pueblo-county-kids-get-covid-19-vaccine/>
- ⁴² <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-11-19/two-people-charged-over-anti-vaccination-protest-in-joondalup/100636234>

⁴³ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/london/completely-false-anti-vaccine-cease-and-desist-order-prompts-complaints-to-police-1.6088212> ; <https://www.vice.com/en/article/3aqvkw/qanons-are-harassing-people-at-the-whim-of-a-woman-they-say-is-canadas-queen-romana-didulo>

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⁴⁵ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/saskatoon/covid-19-vaccine-fraud-saskatchewan-pharmacies-1.6234522>; <https://ottawa.ctvnews.ca/gatineau-que-man-facing-charges-in-ottawa-in-phony-vaccine-certificate-scheme-1.5639283>; <https://globalnews.ca/news/8348366/covid-19-concern-mounts-fake-vaccine-exemption-letters-bc/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ontario-province-vaccine-system-breach-arrests-1.6259544>